

**ELEMENTS &
NOTATION
OF MUSIC**

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Elements & Notation of Music by James M. McLaughlin

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JAMES M. MCLAUGHLIN

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OF MUSIC**

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By

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Boston, U.S.A.

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By J. M. McLAUGHLIN

Preface

IN a graded course of instruction in music practical skill should be supplemented by a corresponding amount of theoretical knowledge in order that the full educational value of the art may be realized.

That portion of the theory of music contained in this volume relates almost exclusively to the elements and notation of vocal music. Its compilation was prompted by the apparent need of uniformity among teachers and pupils in defining, describing, and explaining the common elementary effects, terms, and characters occurring in school music.

While Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians" has been the standard followed by the author, many other reliable works have also been consulted, a partial list of which is given at the end of the book.

The general plan of "Elements and Notation of Music" is similar to that of "Rudiments of Music," by W. H. Cummings, London.

To that writer belongs the credit for the idea herein developed, that notes represent duration only, *i. e.*, time, while pitch is represented by the lines and spaces of the staff.

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Elements and Notation of Music

Introduction

1. **Sound** is the sensation produced through the organs of hearing.
2. **Sound** is caused by the vibrations of an object called a *sounding body*.
3. The word **tone** is often used instead of "*sound*."
4. The *media* of vibrations may be the air, or other gas, a liquid, or an elastic body.
5. A **musical sound** is produced when the vibrations are continued and regular.
6. A **noise** results when there is but a single impulse, as an electric spark, or a series of irregular impulses or vibrations.
7. **Sound** has *three essential* characteristics: **pitch, force, and quality**.
8. **Pitch** is the relative acuteness or gravity of a sound, and is dependent upon the rapidity of the vibrations by which the sound is produced.
The more rapid the vibrations, the higher the sound.
The slower the vibrations, the lower the sound.
9. **Force** or intensity of sound depends primarily upon the extension of the vibrations.

Elements and Notation of Music

(a) Sounds may be *loud* or *soft*.

Larger and more extended vibrations produce louder sounds.

10. The **quality** or timbre of a sound depends upon the number and relative intensity of its harmonics* or overtones.† It is that property which distinguishes a certain sound played upon two or more different instruments, as a horn and a violin.

11. Besides the three elements of pitch, force, and quality, a musical sound has a fourth: **length**, or duration.

* **Harmonics**: Secondary sounds produced by the vibrations of aliquot parts of a sounding body.

† This explanation by Helmholtz regarding *quality* cannot be held to be conclusive because of the theory of undertones advocated by other scientists.

Chapter I

PITCH OF SOUNDS

12. **Music** is the effect produced by the combination of sounds in rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic order.

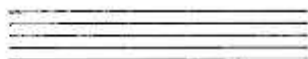
Less specifically, it is the effect produced by the union of pitch and duration.

13. The pitch of musical sounds is represented by horizontal lines and spaces.

14. The duration of musical sounds is represented by the shapes of characters called **notes** (sec. 69).

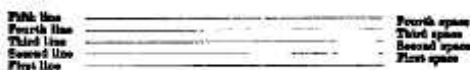
15. The lines and spaces by which musical sounds are represented to the eye are like a ladder, the lowest line being considered the first. The higher the step on the ladder, the higher will be the pitch.

THE STAFF



16. Five horizontal lines and four equal spaces are called the **staff**.

17. The lines and spaces of the staff are named from the lowest upwards.



18. Two five-lined staves placed one above the other, with an extra line between, making a large staff of eleven lines and ten spaces, are called —